Arturo Giraldez

The Age of Trade: The Manila Galleons and the Dawn of the Global Economy. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015. Pp. xi + 255. Hb \$38.

Since 1995, Arturo Giraldez and Dennis Flynn have become leaders in the field of world history by drawing significant attention to the importance of the Manila galleon trade. Their work has emphasized China's defining influence on the making of the global economy, demonstrated the unquestionable centrality of silver to the early modern world system, and controversially argued that the Spanish settlement at Manila in 1571 marked the "birth of globalization." In *The Age of Trade*, Arturo Giraldez summarizes and expands upon this previous work by placing the 250-year history of the galleons into a "worldwide historical context." He seeks, furthermore, "to show how diverse disciplines—geology, climate history, ecology, economics, religion, and technology—and the study of people's everyday lives are fundamentally interconnected with [the galleons]" (5). As the reader might expect, any attempt at such a comprehensive list of disciplines covering so long a span of time is bound to fall short. On the other hand, Giraldez's interdisciplinary ambition is also responsible for giving us a work that is as valuable as it is long overdue. Finally, we have a definitive and updated academic overview of the galleon trade.

The work's textbook like coverage and general reliability are invaluable assets to both specialists and to a general academic audience. Before now, historians seeking to understand the galleons have had to turn to a diverse and often obscure hodgepodge of articles, books, and primary sources just to connect the most basic dots about the galleons. How were they constructed and run? What world powers defined and were interested in them? And how far was their economic reach? To beginners in the field, the disconnected scholarship and evidence surrounding these basic questions has been daunting to say the least. By interweaving diverse sources, however, Giraldez has made a comprehensive history of the galleons accessible even to those who do not primarily study the Philippines, including of course those interested in Jesuit studies. Indeed, insofar as *Journal of Jesuit Studies* readers are invested in the workings of early global trade, this text will long be an indispensable reference. Giraldez here also draws some direct attention to the galleon's relationship to early Jesuits missions in Asia, including several mentions of Alonso Sánchez—who advocated for a Philippine-based plan to conquer China—as well as the early Jesuit chronicler Francisco Colin. He also touches on the galleon's connections to the better known Matteo Ricci, Michele Ruggieri, and Francis Xavier.

The book is appropriately organized around the Philippines, the center of the Pacific galleons' long history. It begins by examining pre-Hispanic life and

trade in the islands, moves on to Spanish beginnings in the archipelago, then to colonial settlement, an overview of the seventeenth century, a description of the galleons with their voyages, the economic forces that defined the trade, and finally concludes with a chapter on the long eighteenth century and the end of the galleons. The coverage is meticulous and encyclopedic, giving the reader a comprehensive summary of major events occurring in the islands for several centuries. Indeed, on shallow observation one might think that the book is just a history of the Philippines dressed up in new clothing. But Giraldez's approach makes it more than that. Yes, the narrative, like the galleons, is anchored in the Philippines, but the story also expands outward into the rest of the world, touching on the histories of the Portuguese and Dutch empires, of China and Japan, of the Philippine Moro wars, and even of Armenian and New Christian (Sephardic Jewish) trade networks. The book's primary drawback is clear from its only glaring omission: a conclusion. As this would suggest, at times the work seems to lack explicit direction and central thematic arguments. Its expansive coverage nevertheless indispensably paves the way for a growing body of literature about the early modern Philippines, the galleons, and their rippling effects on the rest of the world.

Ethan Hawkley

Wesley College

Ethan.Hawkley@wesley.edu

DOI 10.1163/22141332-00304009-16